

mocking laughter which, is heard so often in his other works.

Alroy, the second direct 'product of the Eastern journey, though, as already noted, not published till March, 1833, was begun two years earlier during Disraeli's visit to Jerusalem ; indeed, in later life Disraeli ascribed to it an even earlier origin.

I had commenced *Alroy* the year after my first publication, and had thrown the manuscript aside. Being at Jerusalem in the year 1831, and visiting the traditionary Tombs of the Kings, my thoughts recurred to the marvellous career which had attracted my boyhood, and I shortly after finished a work which I began the year after I wrote *Vivian Grey*.¹

The novel appeared as '*The Wondrous Tale of Alroy*, by The Author of *Vivian Grey* and *Oontarini Fleming*,' and with a dedication to Sarah Disraeli ; and like *Vivian Grey* and *The Young Duke* it was published by Colburn; Murray, out of heart with the frightful aspect of coming events,' and 'his incessant ill luck in the publication of works of fiction,' and not encouraged by the comparative failure of *Oontarini Fleming*, had returned the manuscript unread when the author submitted it.

The period of the novel is the twelfth century, when the Caliphate was in a state of rapid decay and the Empire of Western Asia was divided among the Seljuks : its purpose, in Disraeli's own words, ' the celebration of a gorgeous incident in the annals of that sacred and romantic people from whom I derive my blood and name.'² The real David Alroy appears to have been little better than a vulgar impostor, but Disraeli has idealised him into a figure worthy to be compared with Judas Maccabaeus.

¹ General Preface to the Novels.

³ Preface to *The Revolutionary Epick*, 1834.